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THE GREAT ENIGMA

IT is certain that what used to be called progress, in a half-religious sense, is now dead. Something strange and static has taken its place. No one can quite say what it is. It is not materialism, for no one in his senses is quite satisfied with watching goods produced just for the mere sake of production. It is not social apathy for it is doubtful if there ever were more social vitality than at present. It is not irreligion because it is probable that a social conscience was never more active, in countless ways, than today. No, the departure of progress as a kind of moral passion, has left behind it a vague emptiness of flatness of spirit that baffles the social observer.

Entertainment and not information

The two chief speakers in the first real debate, last week, of the new Parliamant were obviously aware of it. Mr. Bevan wishes parliamentary debates to be televised. One of the reasons he gave was that the newspapers rarely now offer reasonable reports of the debates. Nobody, via the newspapers, is interested. This should not be taken as a criticism of the debates, more, it should be taken as a question mark about the newspapers, and presumably the public they serve. The chief function of the Press now seems to be to entertain rather than inform.

Mr. Bevan was only noting from a parliamentary angle what can be seen from a general social one. Even the best papers can now ignore vital information, and almost conspicuously so, in favour of what seems to be the entertaining news. How many of the best papers have reported in any way to make the news vital, the proceedings of the nuclear control commission which has been meeting for nearly twelve months in Geneva? Yet it is safe to say that no international body has got nearer to important disarmament than this. Nothing quite so important towards the elimination of the H-bomb has taken place in the past twelve months. Yet most people are deeply ignorant of it. Their newspapers have not informed them.

Mr. Butler, in the same debate, asking what the Government had to do (and speaking in the same responsible way as Mr. Bevan), said that attention had to be given to mind and spirit as well as material needs. But what kind of attention? And what kind of mind and spirit? Those are the questions that the social enigma leaves mostly unanswered.

The Uses of Diversion

The truth is that modern society has now reached, in

an important way, the situation of Blaise Pascal's king. The king, who had everything he wanted, had to be diverted from looking at himself, or being with himself, by hunting a hare all day. Foolish to give him the hare, the hunt was the thing. He had to pretend that he was doing something exciting just to forget himself. Many men are kings nowadays. Progress has given up all it had to give, and even more than was ever expected of it. Yet what remains save diversion? The old searing cry of "Vanity of vanities all is vanity" is heard in the desperation of newspapers attempting to entertain sensationally, and from the treadmill of broadcasting, attempting to think up something new to attract.

The real act of creation that was partly implicit in the old half-religious idea of progress, that of the "destruction of what is in order to create what ought to be" has mostly vanished. The creation of difference, chiefly for the sake of difference, is now the intention instead of "what ought to be". For the attempt to reach "what ought to be" meant the attempt to reach what was permanent and real. No one supposes that what passes as public interest today is permanent and real.

The Spiritual Islands

Religious bodies that are concerned with what is really abiding, and undertake the necessary spiritual disciplines and conflicts to reach it (always the fundamental qualification), are the islands of truth in the vague opaque sea of current spiritual indifferentism. They have to carry faith and intellectual courage hand in hand. Without faith they cannot confront with inner certainty the indifferentism, and without mental courage they cannot escape from the clichés that indifferentism often uses in religious language to escape from its own emptiness. Religious bodies therefore are probably only those that can turn the old half-religion of progress into the real religion of creation.

They can be the islands upon which a new life of the spirit can be created, the life that needs no diversion but only the power to contemplate from whence it came and whither it goeth. There is nothing new in this, all that is new is that a fresh human situation has to be mastered. The temporal once again has to be distinguished from the eternal, and in being distinguished transformed from vanity into life-giving joy.

WHAT IS A CHURCH?

By A. Phillip Hewett

THE position of the radically non-conformist church is not an easy one, but before we ask why it is not an easy one we had better ask the prior question, just what is a church? What is a church for? What can it do? Is it necessary?

It goes without saying that a church can exist without a building, that it can exist within a wide variety of ideas and practices. Basically, it is a community of men and women united in the service of religion, whatever they may conceive religion to be. As to that, there is no general agreement, but in the broadest sense I think more and more people are coming to realize that any object of total loyalty is a religious object. Religion, therefore, is not based upon petty and trivial fringe concerns of life. It deals with the central and most fundamental concerns of all, those concerns to which a man can give himself with all his heart and soul and mind and strength.

It is what L. P. Jacks called "the spontaneous response of the whole man to the whole of his experience." Of course, it follows that we have to get beyond the common superstition of our day that religion-in-general is a good thing. There can be good forms of religion and there can be bad forms. But though religion is not necessarily good in the forms it takes, it is something inescapable: Man cannot in the last resort live, as distinct from existing, without some form of religion. He may not choose to call it religion, he may shrink from any and every form of religious organization, but the basic impulse to find wholeness and meaning in life to which he can respond effectively with his whole being is there. He may use the image of a personal God, or an impersonal God, or a life force, or a vision of a perfected humanity, or some other symbol again, but the basic impulse remains the same.

How can a church serve this impulse? By gathering together the total response, not of an individual man, but of man-in-community. There is no other institution which can do this—unless the State tries to usurp the place of the church as it did in Nazi Germany or is doing in present-day China. The outward observance becomes a means towards a deepening and strengthening of a common life together. It is a symbol, or if you will, a sacrament. It is something of this sort that the services of a church, no matter what form they take, can do for us if they are really fulfilling their function. They symbolize the life of all of us, everyone, with all our memories, and ideas, and sentiments and decisions and affirmations bound together as we surely are in one common life from generation to generation.

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This is something which must involve active participation by everyone if it is to be effective. A congregation is not an audience. Unless we feel ourselves to be sharers in one experience and one aspiration then we are not really a congregation. We have to look out from beyond our individual selves and use our service as a window upon the world—and not the world alone, but all of this boundless universe in its various and mysterious dimensions. You can't participate by proxy if the act is to have any meaning, any more than you can ask someone else to take your wife out to dinner on your wedding anniversary if the act is to have any meaning. You have to be yourself a part of the community of experience. And this is something against which so many of the tendencies of our age push hard. We are asked to assume more and more the role of spectators, at sports events, at artistic performances, at meetings, movies, or seated at home in front of our television sets. It is hardly surprising that there should spring up a tendency towards the same thing at church but if we are to capitulate to it then we have lost the whole spirit of religion. We might just as well stay at home and read a good book.

It is precisely here that Protestant churches, with the exception of the Quakers, have largely failed to give adequate expression to the fullness of the religious spirit. So many times we say we go to church to hear the sermon—not to participate in some experience. I am not saying that the sermon is unimportant, nor that it is impossible for a sermon to serve as a vehicle for a group

experience. What I am saying is that it is impossible for it to do so adequately if religion is indeed a matter involving the whole of one's heart and soul and mind and strength.

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In this general Protestant tendency, Unitarianism certainly shares. Sometimes it goes beyond what you will find elsewhere for in our suspicions of empty formalism or meaningless ritual inherited from outmoded ideas, we sometimes go so far as to feel that all dignity and solemnity and purposefulness should be thrown out altogether, as though the basic concerns of life were best celebrated in an entirely casual and informal way or solely by a process of argument and analysis.

Admittedly, Unitarianism faces special difficulties here as well as having special advantages. We have the advantage of sincerity for the individual, but we lack a common creed which can be portrayed in common forms of worship. A common spirit is not as easy to symbolize as a common creed. In trying to give outward form and expression to that spirit we are bound to arrive at forms of expression with which not everyone will agree. This means that of everyone who participates in a Unitarian service there is required an openness to many points of view and not a firm demand for one point of view alone. This involves a spirit of give and take, a combination of loyalty to one's own convictions and willingness to respect those of others. This means that the forms of expression that are adopted by the group will probably fit no one exactly, but they are accepted because of the shared spirit which they try so inadequately to express.

On the whole, we achieve this oftener than one might have the audacity to expect. Seldom do we witness the immaturity of outlook that stalks out during the service because something is said or done that is not absolutely tailor-made to the individual. I have seen that happen elsewhere. On one occasion I saw a fairly large-scale exodus from a church of another denomination just before the sermon because a Unitarian minister had been invited to preach. Any church which is trying to achieve a real spirit of community based upon sincerity and upon shared endeavour is better off without persons like that. What they need is a church and a denomination with a membership of one.

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Where there is a genuine spirit of give and take, it is the group spirit and the group experience growing and flowering in combination with diversities of conviction, that will determine the forms of outward expression. It is not easy. The group spirit is absolutely essential if it is to succeed, and that spirit cannot be imposed. It can only grow. But where it does grow, no words or forms will be sacrosanct. It will be a matter of finding the most natural, the most spontaneous, the most dignified, the most moving, the most realistic, the most effective forms of expression in which all can participate as fully as possible in order to evoke what Whitehead called "the commanding vision".

COMMENTARY

By Tom Wolfe

Beating about the bush

ON the west coast of the United States a new cult has come into being. It is the cult of the "beat" or "beatnik". Beats apparently are sensitive literary young persons outraged by the values of a civilization dominated jointly by the mass advertiser and the military strategist, who make their protest by means of an elaborate non-conformism.

They wear casual and eccentric dress, earn little money, write experimental poetry, drink wine, smoke marijuana and toy with philosophies of nihilism and non-existence. Their influence is not inconsiderable. They are responsible for the renaissance of Zen Buddhism and the emergence of west-coast jazz. They have produced writers like Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg. Their numbers are reported to be growing.

It is not difficult of course to trace similarities between them and the left-bank existentialists of Paris, the angry young men of Britain, the youthful suicides of Stockholm. Their universal enemy is boredom, their favourite word, protest.

The problem of the young isolate is not a new one in the twentieth century. There were the anarchists of the Edwardian era, the F. Scott-Fitzgeralds and the D. H. Lawrences of the aspirin age of the twenties, the Christopher Isherwoods of the thirties. Alienated from the rest of society they could serve no cause but the cause of revolt.

It is the same with our contemporary bohemians. Often people of outstanding talent and sensibility, they long for ideals to embrace, but can find none; they can find no outlet for their need to dedicate themselves so they give themselves to self-torture and ennui.

Ernst Renan asked seventy years ago: "how long can the generations live on the scent of an empty perfume bottle?" He was referring to the atrophying of orthodox Christianity with its life-view, its system of ethics, its peculiar dynamic which gave to the civilisation of the West its direction and meaning. The "beat generation" is beginning to learn what it is like to live in "a society without a metaphysic".



Are these people important? I believe they are immensely so, because they *care*. They include many of the young people who might now be crowding the world's theological colleges if their lives were otherwise oriented, but they will not be persuaded easily into creative religious attitudes. Down at the base of their confusion lies a preoccupation with integrity. Unitarianism feels it knows something about integrity; it ought to have something to say to them. And they are relevant, their milder counterparts are to be found in every city in the Kingdom.

Parsons' Trade Union?

Talking with a hospital chaplain the other day I discovered that full-time chaplains are represented on the Whitley Council where they can negotiate their salary levels with the authorities of the National Health Service. He told me that he was now quite used to the practice and so was the Council. He saw in it nothing inconsonant with his Christian vocation.

From another quarter comes the proposal for a federation of professions to strengthen the negotiating power of non-production workers. Will this include ministers?

The prospect is unlikely. Doctors, dentists, teachers are now employees of the State. Their financial interests are assumed to be opposed to those of the State. Not so with churches. A minister is presumably concerned about both the financial well-being of himself and his denomination and would not like to see one advanced at the expense of the other.

However, it is questionable whether the approach to this matter in, say, our own General Assembly, is the right one. A new scale of stipends has recently been suggested to the churches, with an emphasis that it is a minimum scale. Yet in the same memorandum it is confessed that previous scales have always been taken as maxima rather than minima. Is the same error to be repeated?

It is a principle of sound personnel management that salaries are determined according to what the job is worth, not what the company can afford to pay. This is reassuring to the employee concerned, and acts as an incentive for laggard companies to bring their own scales in line.

All business practices are not appropriate to church management, but this one might be.

Soul-care

The founding of the Eliot-Wilde Library of books on pastoral psychology will be of great value to our ministry. The works so far listed are of interest principally to full-time pastors. There is also a need for members of congregations to understand more deeply the relationship of faith to the personal life. A very helpful book in this connection is "Anxiety in Christian Experience" by Dr. Wayne E. Oates, an American Baptist

minister. It is refreshingly liberal and profound. Published by Allen and Unwin.

International Guests

When Spring comes round again there will begin the annual influx of young people to this country from overseas. Many stay at youth hostels which are excellent places of fellowship and hospitality.

Not infrequently though they seek the intimate companionship of a private home where they may learn of the ways of the British people at first hand. There are several organisations which make this possible—the East-West Friendship Council and the Experiment in International Living for example. Yet they are largely limited to university students who wish to stay for extended periods.

Another organisation, less formally administered, is Servas, the work-study-travel system (from the Esperanto word, "I serve"). Hosts undertake to provide a maximum of two days and nights free hospitality to a visitor from overseas. Arrangements are made by the traveller giving a specified period of notice.

Several Unitarian families already participate in the scheme. The rules are simple, the experience extremely worthwhile. During recent months we have had a Japanese, a Ugandan, an Indian, an American Unitarian and a German staying with my family. They have all been willing to talk to discussion groups and visit the church.

British people in their turn are entitled to use the system in Europe and elsewhere. There is no age-limit, but travellers must be prepared to accept all types of accommodation.

Items

* I was interested to learn that Gerard Hoffnung the musical humorist who died last month, was a Quaker.

* I confess that I find the literature of the Unitarian Temperance Association terribly simple-minded. Alcoholism is a growing problem, but clearly not just the product of the ready availability of drink. The roots lie deeper. It would be good to see the Association examining them.

* How many times has the term "New Left" been used since 1948? It has come to birth again in the "New Left Review" founded since the election. Like the beats, the NLR is worried about "commercial values." Let's hope it has something really new to say.

* Will readers join me in a resolve not to buy or send any Christmas cards this year unless the proceeds go to some worthy cause?

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN LANCASHIRE

By A. B. Downing

Annual Service of Recognition and Welcome into the Ministry

THE G.A. Annual Service of Recognition and Welcome into the Ministry was held this year in Bolton. It is one of our annual occasions. The form and design of it we leave—wisely or unwisely according to prejudice or principle—to the local people responsible. The prospective attendee, therefore, never quite knows what he is going to be let in for. We Unitarians never have clearly defined ideas on what the orthodox call Faith and Order. But if the preacher chosen for the occasion is the Rev. Eric Shirvell Price, you can at least be sure of a flaming chalice if not of fireworks—though there were quite enough of these (of a spiritual variety) to let off a whole series of mild explosions.

There was no doubt at all that it was a most impressive service and the local faithful reinforced in large numbers the G.A. Council members who were there by right and duty. Bank Street Chapel, Bolton, has been for long a mighty Unitarian out-post. In its newly decorated state the dour colours of more sober ages have given way to more daring reds and blues against a general background of contemporary fawn. And of course in that spear-head of Unitarian Advance one would expect to find, and one did, the Flaming Chalice. Indeed not only did

one find it outside the Chapel on a huge poster, but it was inside as well, beautifully worked on the pulpit fall. Bolton is in the middle of a Publicity Campaign and this new Unitarian symbolism was not just confined to print or tapestry. Far from it! Not only, in Bolton, can you wear it in your button-hole but the flaming chalice was there in tangible and visible form, in front of the pulpit and behind the tasteful flowers, spurting strongly if a trifle uneasily before our very eyes. Whether the spurting of the flame was due to ancient dissenting draughts or more modern critical breezes is perhaps a moot point. It will be enough to record what one saw without going into what one felt.

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They have a mighty organ at Bank Street and an intrepid choir, which was not frightened to tackle some unusual musical responses to the well-chosen Biblical words spoken by the presiding minister (the Rev. Arthur J. Long). There were some wonderfully impressive and moving features in the rich service. And of course there were the new ministers to be welcomed and recognised by the President. There were eight of them, all presented with due decorum by the G.A. Secretary John Kieley. Some of them perhaps looked a little lost in the ruddy glare of the flaming chalice. Possibly they were accustomed to less novel symbols of English religious life. But we all felt heart and soul with them as they moved forward to the President and back again and we ministers felt moved to remember when we too were welcomed and received. The significance of the occasion was the same even if the outward features were totally different.

Later in this year's service came Mr. Price's own special pride and joy: the Solemn Affirmation, ventured upon for the first time on an occasion of this kind. Rumour had it that the President had been asked to lead us all in the saying of it, but Mr. Vallance—for understandable reasons of prudence and conscience—politely ceded that responsibility to the presiding minister. The large congregation all calmly followed him in the recitation of it as if they had not an intellectual care or spiritual qualm in the world. Indeed a good many of us probably enjoyed the saying together of a series of solemn sentences which seemed to mean a lot in general, if safely not much in particular. At least it was a pleasing volume of congregational sound signifying that if we do not think alike we can at least speak in unison. If we were a bit flummoxed by a "Church Universal, which recognises in all prophets a harmony, in all scriptures a unity and through all dispensations a continuity", by the time we got to this particular affirmation we were too pleased with the sound of our own voices to care very much one way or the other about historical or linguistic niceties. It was a good effort and Mr. Shirvell Price looked, as well he might, as pleased as Punch!

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He it was who had the onerous duty of preaching to us at this year's service. He has a fine voice and with it he saluted the past with lengthy quotations from Martineau and Channing. We were able to remind ourselves again that if the utterances of our forbears were often wordy and obscure, their language was always noble. But, for himself and behind the flickering chalice, Mr. Price had a high old time animadverting on the dignity of Man and sagely reproving poor Unitarian brethren like me for never having faced up to the theory of Relativity. The large Chapel was warm, the pews comparatively comfortable, the occasion was solemn and the lights (except for the aforementioned ruddy flicker) were dim. But Mr. Price, with untold preaching hours to his record, was as lively and fresh at the end of his discourse as he was at the beginning. Time was marching on, but as a fine Unitarian end to a solemn occasion we found ourselves singing lustily in the last hymn that Truth was marching on too, as well as Right and Love and God. At least, we felt, Unitarianism was not stationary. It is certainly not stationary in Bolton and we all dispersed to lavish tea and cakes in the Sunday School Hall, feeling warm with encouragement and satisfaction.

A great deal of care and thought and enthusiasm had gone into this year's Welcome and Recognition Service. Perhaps the Flaming Chalice will be re-lit next year and its chief architect and acolyte, Mr. Price, will be on hand to re-kindle the sacred flame. Perhaps next year too, we shall even make the same Solemn Affirmations in full-throated unison. But on these delicate matters of principle and of taste, who can dare predict what we Unitarians, in our never diminishing inventiveness, will do next?

SOME PEOPLE ARE FACING IT

By John Rowland

DURING the last few years there have been many books on the subject of science and religion, on the possibility of relating these two approaches to life, and of enabling the two to run, so to speak, in double harness. Many of these books have made out a good case; but for the most part their usefulness has been limited by the fact that few men are both scientists and theologians, so that what they have had to say has been accurate from one side, but not always so accurate from the other.

There has just appeared a book which is not subject to this criticism, for its author is both scientist and theologian. Dr. G. D. Yarnold, who is now the Warden of St. Deiniol's Library at Hawarden, one of the finest theological libraries in the country, was formerly Lecturer in Physics at the University of Nottingham; so his discussion of the possible inter-relationship between science and religion, which he calls *The Spiritual Crisis of the Scientific Age* (Allen and Unwin: 18s.) is much more pointed than are many such volumes. The book, he says, has grown out of a series of lectures which he has given in recent years, and one envies those who have had the privilege of listening to those lectures.

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His argument is that the relationship between science and religion is not a conflict, as so many people have suggested. He feels that there is a crisis in thought which is being faced by some people (though not by enough people) at the present day, and he adds that the scientific way of understanding the universe (which he calls "understanding from below") and the religious way of understanding the universe ("understanding from above") are necessarily different, though both ways of understanding can, if rightly appreciated, be combined in the mind of one person. The argument is not unlike that advanced so eloquently in a number of books by Professor Coulson.

Dr. Yarnold does, however, go further in some respects than it would seem Professor Coulson does. In this new book the author argues that it is necessary, not merely to recover men's faith in what we usually call the Christian verities, but to examine the foundations of religion afresh—and sometimes to state them afresh, in terms which are more easily appreciated and understood by those with the scientific background of the twentieth century.

He also makes the point (sometimes neglected by modern thinkers) that there is a need to bring the whole wide realm of scientific and technical activities in our day under the light of religious examination, so that we have somehow to see how science, which is ever-changing, can be viewed against the light of lasting truth.

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The book is not in all ways easy reading; it demands careful concentration. But the reader who is prepared to give it the whole-hearted attention will derive much interest from it.

It is, of course, not in any way a Unitarian book—it is, indeed, not a book to appeal solely to religious liberals. There are some parts of it which will be too strictly orthodox for some readers. But that should not prevent religious people of many schools of thought from deriving considerable benefit from it. Dr. Yarnold contrives to state his case trenchantly, and yet without imposing his own special religious views too strongly on his readers. Indeed, his own special religious views are not

in actual fact, essential to the general argument which he is setting forth. This book is one which will have to be taken into account by any future writer on the problems of science and religion—and there are, after all, not many recent books of which that can be said.

WEEK-END COURSES FOR YOUNG UNITARIANS, 1959

A Report

FAMOUS affairs, these—at least, they ought to be. Mary Halliday of Edinburgh contributes the following account of the Scottish week-end:

This course began on Friday, September 25, and was the second of its kind to be held in Edinburgh within the past four years. The participants were young people from three of the four Scottish churches—Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow—and from our church at Newcastle. The planned get-together in St. Mark's church hall on Friday evening was rather scrappy owing to the lateness—in both senses—of trains.

On Saturday morning sightseeing over the Castle Rock and down the Royal Mile was arranged and conducted by Mr. Ian Anderson. The first serious discussions began in the afternoon, when the Rev. Bruce Findlow spoke on "What can Young Unitarians say about their religion to their non-Unitarian friends?" Mr. Findlow did not attempt to answer this question for us but dealt with some of the issues involved in it. For example, one of the questions given to the older group of students at discussion-time was, whether, when stating our own beliefs to non-Unitarians, we should stress the similarities to orthodox views or the differences from them. By discussing this and other questions we found how easy it would be to give others the impression that ours is a negative religion with very little positive thinking in it. Much discussion, recorded and unrecorded, went on in the three groups, which had been formed according to age, thus catering for the wide age-range of those attending—15 to 24.

After tea many of the Scottish students retired to hold the annual general meeting of the Scottish region of the U.Y.P.L. The remainder became engrossed in discussing under the leadership of the Rev. Dudley Richards, their reasons for attending church and school, and what reasons or inducements they could offer to their friends to attend with them. The evening social, organised by the Edinburgh students, ended with a singing and a very fitting epilogue read by one of the Newcastle girls.

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The session before service on Sunday morning was taken by Mr. Richards. We had a very interesting impromptu talk by him on "Group Dynamics" before embarking on the official subject "A magazine for widely-scattered Churches". We gained some very useful information and helpful suggestions which the Scottish Regional Committee should be able to apply when the matter comes up again in November. The presence of us all at St. Mark's morning service increased the congregation to almost one hundred. In the sermon, Mr. Findlow gave his own answer to Saturday's question, declaring that, for him, Unitarianism means believing, worshipping, rejoicing and serving.

After Sunday dinner there was an "Any Questions?" session on all the themes raised during the course; and then we broke up into groups to evaluate the week-end. According to the reports everyone seemed satisfied with what had been an enjoyable and instructive programme. I am sure I speak for all who attended when I say "thank you" to all who took part in its organisation. May the next course not be far off!

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One of the guests wishes to add a tribute to the generous hospitality of St. Mark's Church. Every visitor from outside Edinburgh was received into the home of a member of the congregation for the week-end. In consequence, the cost of the course to each student was much lower than it could otherwise have been.

The course at Great Hucklow, a hardy annual, began on October 16. Students attended from the following churches: Bury, Bank Street; Buxton; Chorlton; Dukinfield; Horwich; Leeds, Mill Hill; Liverpool, Ancient Chapel; Manchester, Platt Chapel; Padiham; Pudsey; Rawtenstall; Sheffield, Upper Chapel; Stand; Stalybridge; Stockton-on-Tees; and Swinton. We were fortunate to have the Secretary of the Assembly as one of the staff: Mr. Kiely spoke on the subject of "You and your Church" and provoked some very good and profitable discussion. The Rev. Barbara Thomas came out of retirement to help us for the second time at one of these courses, with the same exciting and stimulating effect. She talked about "Our Unitarian Faith" and preached admirably at the Sunday Service. Mr. Ivan Knowlson is especially well equipped to talk about the Unitarian Young People's League, and his personal approach to the subject was most successful. He reminded us that, as a somewhat shy student, he had attended the first of these week-ends in 1953. The Rev. Dudley Richards led sessions on "Our Unitarian Heritage" and "Personal Relations in the Church".

It was as good a week-end as ever, strenuous (we had talks before breakfast!), but utterly enjoyable and profitable. In their session of evaluation, the students had much to praise and little to criticize. As usual, Mr. Henry Tittle, the warden of the Holiday Homes, and his staff looked after us faithfully in every way.

The success of these courses owes much to the organising secretaries. We are grateful to Miss Caroline Bell of Edinburgh, and Miss Eunice Haddock of Bank street, Bolton, for their careful attention to every detail.

D.R.

THE HIBBERT JOURNAL

THE October issue of the "Hibbert Journal" is as striking as any number of recent years. Pride of place is given to a long article by Sir Julian Huxley, on "Darwin and the Idea of Evolution". Sir Julian claims that all the objections which were made at the time when Darwin wrote have now been met, and evolution as a result of natural selection has been firmly proved.

Other worth-while contributions are: a discussion of the increasingly-fashionable outlook of Zen Buddhism, by Mr. A. N. Marlow, Lecturer in Latin in the University of Manchester (surely a rather unusual post for an expert on Buddhism!); a statement of the role of comparative religion in promoting mutual understanding, by Dr. Zvi Werblowsky of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem; Dr. Paul Winter's interesting attempt at identifying the "Wicked Priest" in the Dead Sea Scrolls; and a survey of "The Loom of God", by an American Unitarian Minister, the Rev. Ford Lewis.

Most immediately topical, perhaps, is "Medicine Versus Law", by Richard North, in which the author, taking his facts from recent legal findings (one as recent as July of the present year), considers the position of legal and other experts on the matter of insanity and its bearing on guilt or innocence in the law courts. This is a rather more practical article than is sometimes found in a largely philosophical journal, but it raises matters of very great importance in the legal world.

J.R.

Evelyn Mary Montgomery

The sudden death, on October 20, of Evelyn Montgomery is mourned by many friends. The eldest daughter of the late R. M. Montgomery, K.C., she was brought up in the Unitarian faith and held firmly to it all her life. She studied at Bedford College for the B.A., and later for the M.A., in Classics, and in her chosen profession she became a most successful and well-loved teacher. She retired recently after long service at the George Dixon School for Girls, Edgbaston. During her years in Birmingham she attached herself to the Church of the Messiah, and gave it devoted support, holding in course of time the offices of president of the Women's League, warden, and chairman of the congregation. Her modest and unassuming personality concealed strength of purpose and great practical ability. She was a most generous promoter of the Church's work and a valued friend to its minister and its members. At a largely-attended memorial service on October 24, a moving tribute to her work and character was spoken by the Rev. Gordon Stuart.

D.T.

Correspondence

Letters should be addressed to the Editor, "The Inquirer", 14 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1. They should not in general exceed three to four hundred words in length.

A Difficult Matter

Sir: Referring to Mrs. E. M. Crosskey's letter in your issue of the 31st October, does she seriously contend that all churches which cannot pay the minimum stipends recommended by the General Assembly should close? Low as these stipends are, there are a number of churches which cannot raise them and, if this policy of closure were followed, I believe there would be a deplorable reduction in Unitarian congregations. There are many small congregations, by no means ready to die yet, which really do not provide full time work for a minister. It is such cases which, I imagine, the Western Union had in mind when it passed its realistic and sensible resolution.

It often happens that ministers, on reaching retiring age and qualifying for pensions, are glad to retire from an exacting full time ministry, but desire to undertake the ministry of a small congregation on a part time basis, especially a country church with a suitable parsonage provided. I have known several such cases. Joint pastorates, part time lay pastors and an increase in the number of lay preachers could all help, too, to keep churches from closing. The possibility of a circuit system under which a minister would have the supervision of a group of churches should also be considered.

Churches fall into categories and what is required is a personal visit of commissioners appointed by the General Assembly on a regional basis to visit every church, attending services and personally interviewing the church officers and trustees. The reports and recommendations of the commissioners should then be collated and carefully considered by the G.A. with a view to formulating a realistic—and, may be, drastic—policy for the future conduct and staffing of our churches, with a view to their continuance. I believe that this personal contact is absolutely essential and that information obtained through questionnaires and form filling is quite inadequate. Let there be no talk of closure where continued life is possible. Here is a difficult problem which should be faced with courage, realism and faith.

Exeterham.

Yours, Kenneth Gill Smith.

Religion and Politics

Sir: In replying to Sylvia Johnson, I would like to make it clear that I understand Communism to mean Marxism-Leninism. In this sense I do not agree with her that it is debatable whether or not Communists can be Christians and/or Unitarians. Whatever may be said by the latter, the official teaching of Orthodox World Communism is that they are utterly irreconcilable.

I do not think that your correspondent's argument in favour of the possibility of compatibility is strengthened by taking Dr. Schwarz's words out of their context. While it may be debated that Christians have believed brutality to be justified in furthering the interests of Christianity, surely it would be going rather too far to contend that Christians have ever made a virtue of consciously standing truth on its head in order to establish its validity.

I conceive that politics and religion should march together in search of material and spiritual truth. As Christians and/or Unitarians we cannot say it depends what you mean by truth, although quite obviously, Communists and others feel perfectly at liberty to interpret the meaning of truth in the light of current expediency. Herein lies the fundamental difference between the two ideologies, as I see it, I hope, quite dispassionately.

Glasgow.

Yours, T. G. M. Guise.

Croydon Origins

Sir: In Miss Butcher's article (Oct. 24) she made a brief but informative reference to the founding of the Croydon church. She recorded that "a group of men" (no women?) in May, 1870, resolved "to form a Unitarian congregation". Speedily procuring an iron church, they drew up the usual Open Trust deed, and in December, 1870, opened the building with a title adopted on the advice of Dr. Martineau, as the Croydon Free Christian Church.

Croydon, I feel sure, was the first church to adopt this title, and it must have been a comfort to Dr. Martineau, for three years earlier he had endeavoured, with inadequate support, to persuade the Annual Meeting of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association to change its name to the B. & F. Free Christian Association—a term hitherto unknown in Unitarian circles. After forty-two years of vigorous life this was too much to expect of the Association, and in the face of heavy opposition the motion was withdrawn. The promoters, however, founded a "Free Christian Union"; but in less than three years it was wound up for lack of support, in the very month when Croydon Free Christian Church was opened.

It is equally interesting to recall that in 1888, when Dr. Martineau made his ambitious attempt to unite all our churches in one denomination on a Presbyterian system, he dismissed as unacceptable not only the term Unitarian, but likewise "Liberal Christian" and "Free Christian"; terms which, he said, "aim at marking the absence of doctrinal tests", but do so "by words implying reproach to others as not 'free', and as 'illiberal'". People who never meet for worship, he pointed out, "may also be 'free' from tests, and may pass no illiberal judgments upon others", and he instanced the Ethical Societies.

How marvellous it was that, forty years later, we were all made one in a General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches! London. Mortimer Rowe.

News Review

Farewell to Horwich

Horwich Unitarian Free Church's members and friends turned out in force to pack the school for a farewell social send-off for the Rev. Joyce Hazlehurst, their popular minister for the past six years.

The evening was a merry and lively one—Miss Hazlehurst herself contributed to the entertainment provided by members of all the church's organisations, with an hilarious "Ballad of the Departing Minister". But it was a sad one too, with warm tributes to Miss Hazlehurst's work at Horwich from the church chairman, Mr. James Tyrrell, and treasurer, Mr. Norman Tensch.

It was Mr. Tyrrell who referred to Miss Hazlehurst's sterling efforts for the Sunday School. When she became lay pastor at Horwich in May, 1950, the Sunday School had fewer than a dozen members: now there are well over 60, with a remarkable attendance record.

Women's League had made a flourishing re-appearance, and active Young People's and Men's Leagues had been formed during her ministry.

On behalf of the congregation, Mr. Tyrrell presented to Miss Hazlehurst a cheque with Horwich's gratitude for all her hard work, and with their best wishes for her future career at Birmingham.

Miss Hazlehurst's companion, Miss Ada Hesketh, who has accompanied her to Birmingham, received a dressing table set, presented by the church's vice-chairman, Mr. A. J. Curren.

Miss Hesketh has been an active figure, too. She has been chairman of the Horwich branch of the R.S.P.C.A., secretary of the local Women's World Day of Prayer Committee, and a lay preacher with the North and East Lancashire Unitarian and Free Christian Lay Preachers' Association.

The night before the farewell social saw Miss Hazlehurst's last service in the church she has served so well, and there was a large congregation which included members of many organisations with which she has been associated.

For some weeks before she left, Miss Hazlehurst was guest of honour of all the church's organisations and was presented with farewell gifts.

A coach-load of members made the 200-mile round trip to Birmingham to be at Miss Hazlehurst's induction service at Waverley Road Church, and Horwich's Senior Y.P.L. branch, which was spending the week-end in London, returned home via Tamworth, where on Sunday night Miss Hazlehurst was conducting Harvest Festival services.

Death of Rosalind Lee

We deeply regret to report the death of the Rev. Rosalind Lee which took place in a nursing home in Birmingham on November 3rd. An obituary notice will appear next week.

Elizabeth Campbell Clay

Elizabeth C. Clay died suddenly at Philadelphia, U.S.A., in June. A Memorial Service was held at Northgate End Chapel, Halifax, on September 11th, conducted by the Rev. J. B. Tonkin.

She was a well-known and familiar figure in the town of Halifax. All those who had the privilege of knowing her must have felt her to be one of the most remarkable characters they had met and known. Born in Boston, Mass., in 1871, she came to Halifax over 50 years ago. In her later years she endured severe physical handicaps. In spite of these and her years, she had the secret of remaining young in every way. Always she overflowed with a creative joy in living.

Her range of interests and activities was all-embracing. She was an ex-Mayor of Halifax. She actively supported all the advanced educational, social and cultural activities of her adopted town. By reason of her work and personality, she was an embodied inspiration of the brave outpouring life to all her friends in Northgate End Chapel.

J.B.T.

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Death

Lee.—On 3rd November 1959 in a Birmingham nursing home Emma Rosalind Lee, Unitarian minister, of Penmaen, Gower, younger daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Grosvenor Lee.

Animal Sunday

World Day for Animals (St. Francis Day) was observed at George's Meeting (Unitarian), South Street, Exeter, on Sunday October 4th, with officials and members of the Devon and Exeter branches of the World League against Vivisection and for the Protection of Animals, the Society for United Prayer for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection attending. Even two dogs went to the services, the minister's dachshund Vanessa to the children's service in the morning and the beloved boxer Nero of the secretary of the BUAV in the evening, both behaving splendidly. Posters with pictures showing some of the terrible cruelties practised by those experimenting on living animals (in 1958: over three million experiments in Great Britain, and over 250,000 monkeys exported from India through London for vivisection purposes) were exhibited.

The minister, the Rev. Dr. F. D. Meyer-Klugel, said in his address that no society can tolerate the cruelties of vivisection, blood-sports, etc., without lowering its moral dignity and sinning against the sense of kinship of all creation and the Divine principle of love, as taught by all Great Teachers of the human race from Gotama the Buddha to Jesus of Nazareth and Francis of Assisi. He quoted eminent leaders of the medical profession who say that vivisection stands condemned on the three counts of cruelty to animals, uselessness to man, and obstruction on the path of real progress. He pointed out that there is an increasing number of hospitals and doctors realising the part that methods of healing which do not depend on experiments on animals (i.e., healing by prayer, spiritual healing, nature cure, etc.) can play in promoting health. Readings consisted of poems specially written for the World Day for Animals by Janet Graham and Marion Reid, and an Appeal of the Animals to Man published by the International Cultural Forum, U.K. branch. Regular Prayers of Intercession for Animals are held at George's Meeting every first Thursday in the month.

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Miscellaneous

YOUR CHURCH OR YOUTH CLUB can benefit from the sale of Christmas cards published in aid of relief work at home and overseas (the aged, refugees, etc.). Send 3/9 for sample set of 6 attractive cards with details of substantial discount for quantities to Voluntary and Christian Causes, 139 Oxford Street, London, W.1.

ORGANIST required for Unitarian Free Church, Swinton. Regular evening and occasional morning and afternoon services. Applications to F. Johnson, 1, Kidder Road, Swinton, Manchester.

Holidays

UNITARIAN PARTIES—Oberammergau, Igls, Austrian Tyrol (May 15-27). Few vacancies. Oberammergau, Velden, Yugoslavia and Rhineland (August 8-21). Holiday Reunion Bookings. Scarborough (Easter week-end)—Rev. Parkinson, 18b, Westbourne Grove, Scarborough.

Growing Attendance

Lewes: Lewes celebrated its harvest festival with morning and evening services on Sunday, October 4th. There were encouraging attendances on each occasion; the fruit was sold, the proceeds to go to the refugee fund.

Evening services have been held once a month throughout the summer (the first for several years), attendance growing from a dozen to two dozen. During the winter these services will be held twice a month—on the first and third Sundays. Four new members have been enrolled, and several other newcomers have appeared, some of them worshipping regularly with us.